

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) CBSE introduces new elective subjects in the higher secondary stage from time to time based on the felt need of the students and the society.

(b) and (c) CBSE has proposed to introduce the following three new subjects as electives at the higher secondary stage:—

- (i) Creative Writing and Translation Studies
- (ii) Human Rights and Gender Studies
- (iii) Heritage Crafts

CBSE has planned to inform the schools about introduction of these subjects as soon as the text books are ready.

(d) It would be for the schools opting for the new courses to make available suitable teachers to teach the new subjects.

Remuneration to Anganwadi Workers and Helpers

*265. **SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN:**
SHRI CHITTABRATA MAJUMDAR:

Will the Minister of **WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT** be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Integrated Child Development Scheme is a Central Government Scheme;

(b) the remuneration paid to the Anganwadi Workers and Helpers by Government;

(c) whether Government have received any representation for increasing the remuneration of Anganwadi Workers and Helpers;

(d) whether it is the policy of Government to 'retire' Anganwadi Workers and Helpers who have reached 58 years of age;

(e) if so, whether the retired Anganwadi Workers and Helpers are being provided with any pension or gratuity;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme implemented through the State Governments/UT Administrations.

(b) The ICDS Scheme envisages the Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) and Helpers (AWHs) as honorary workers from the local community. The honoraria being paid to Anganwadi Workers out of grant-in-aid released by the Government of India ranges from Rs. 938/- to Rs. 1063/- per month, depending upon their qualifications and experience. Anganwadi Helpers are paid an honorarium of Rs. 500/- per month. Some States are also paying additional honorarium/monetary incentives to Anganwadi Workers/Helpers out of their own resources for additional work assigned to them from time to time.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Since AWWs are honorary workers and not government employees, the question of "retirement" does not arise. However, their honorary services can be discontinued on attainment of a particular age. The question of fixing that age has been left to State Governments/UT Administrations to take an appropriate view in the matter.

(e) to (g) Being honorary workers and in view of the very nature of the role of Anganwadi Workers and Helpers in ICDS Scheme, no pension or gratuity is admissible to them. However, Government of India is fully conscious of the significance of the voluntary efforts put in by Anganwadi Workers and Helpers and, therefore, continuous efforts have been made to improve their working conditions by revising their honorarium from time to time, extending facilities such as paid absence of maternity, insurance cover under the Anganwadi Karyakartri Bima Yojana, reservation of 25% of the vacant posts of Supervisors for Anganwadi Workers and reservation of 25% of the vacancies of AWWs for Anganwadi Helpers etc.

Popularisation of coconut water

*266. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to popularise coconut water as a natural healthy drink in place of other artificial soft drinks;

(b) if so, the details thereof;